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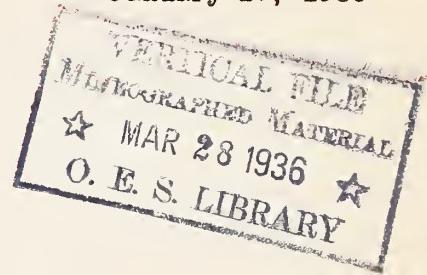
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HOT SCHOOL LUNCHES

IMPROVE ATTENDANCE

It is conceded a good thing for children to have at least one hot food for their school lunch but the problem in many cases is equipment and facilities; in some, suitable supplies; and in others management. Teachers and parents are getting together in many school communities to work out plans for materials and for cooking and serving the food.

Sometimes the school board has provided cooking and serving equipment and a place to keep supplies. Mothers sometimes start a little fund among themselves for food supplies and give dishes and cooking utensils. They even take turns preparing and serving lunches on different days or delegate this task to the older girls, often 4-H club members who have had training in food preparation.

When facilities are limited, one inexpensive hot dish is enough if supplemented with sandwiches, milk, fruit, and cookies from home. The teacher usually plans the menus ahead to insure variety giving the children advance notice of the dishes for the coming week so the mothers can plan the home packed lunch accordingly. It is a great help to have a school pantry stocked with materials for quickly preparing such simple foods as chowders and soups rich in vegetables or milk or both, beans, cheese, scalloped dishes, cocoa.

A Georgia woman, president of her local home demonstration club, combined the club's interests with those of the school. The members of the club needed a neighborhood pressure canner. So the club purchased it and set it up at the school. Each person who used the canner paid a toll of one can out of every ten she filled, for the school pantry. At the end of the canning season, 200 cans stood on the pantry shelves - beans, tomatoes, corn, and soup vegetables. In the fall, the club and school together bought a cow which the women canned. So the school pantry had a supply of beef and broth. That pantry has provided one good nourishing hot dish for every noon of the school year to every child.

A school in Vermont had its own garden and the children themselves raised the vegetables to be canned or stored for their winter lunch. The home economics classes did the canning.

Thirty Iowa women canned all surplus garden foods that were brought to the school for the lunch pantry. They put up 150 quarts of tomatoes and 250 quarts of vegetable combinations.

Each summer, groups of North Carolina women have canning meetings and put up soup mixtures, tomatoes, and other vegetables to supply the schools during the winter.

In many cases children show definite gains after a hot school lunch plan has been established, and school attendance improves noticeably.

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